

PTO Meeting Minutes – April 9, 2014
9:10AM, Hillside Elementary School

Attendance

Michelle Barton, Lori Benedict, Diane Cohle, Marcy DelOrefice, Sian Keating, Cheri Lotan, Lisa Nishikawa, Carla Ojha, Elizabeth Pechin, Dana Zdancewicz.

Approval of Minutes

The meeting minutes from the March 2014 PTO Meeting were approved.

Principal's Report – Diane Cohle

- Mrs. Cohle began by thanking the PTO for all that they do for the kids at Hillside.
- Spring Break is coming up – April 14-18
- PSSA Science testing will be April 22-24 for 4th grade.
- Grade 2 Performance will take place on May 1st during the day for the other grades and on May 2nd at 9:30am for parents.
- May 5th the Middle School principals and accompanying teachers will visit Hillside for the 4th Grade parents.
- This summer there will be no students in the building. There are going to be a number of maintenance and improvement projects:
 - Electrical work
 - Air Conditioning for the Cafeteria
 - IT will install a wireless network
 - Fencing as determined by the District's safety committee

President's Report – Dana Zdancewicz /Lori Benedict

- PTO President's meeting recap:
 - Due to Policy 1124, fundraising efforts have been affected at all of the schools. Because the flyers for certain fundraisers cannot go home thru the student's backpacks, the Yankee Candle fundraiser was drastically affected. Last year, Hillside raised \$900 for the Dental Clinic via the Yankee Candle fundraiser. That money directly helped underprivileged kids in the TE & Great Valley School Districts.
 - Virginia Lastner, Committee Chair of the District's Policy Committee, attended the PTO Presidents meeting. There was a healthy discussion of the pros and cons of the policy and the negative affect on the PTOs who raise funds for programs that enhance the schools.
 - Elementary Connections which has raised over \$1300 for the Hillside PTO in addition to many other items (tickets to plays, gift certificates for birthday parties), according to the new policy, would not prohibited.
 - June 13th at 12:30pm at the TE Administration offices – Room 200. This meeting will provide an open dialogue with the District's Policy Committee.
 - Dana strongly encourages parents to attend the meeting – tell a friend, write a letter to the committee.
 - Another topic discussed was the trend for the schools to go Green and not send home so much paper. Again, the issue of Hillside PTO being the only one hosted on the TE District's Website was raised. We would be able to post flyers online for parents. It was also mentioned that at the Elementary School level, kids and their parents need paper. Dana stated that the PTOs will need to phase out paper, at least to some extent.

- April 30th is the PTO Expo in Oaks. Dana will be attending and encouraged any PTO members to join her, if possible. Dana added the Expo might provide ideas on new ways to fundraise and website development, etc.
- Dana brought up the topic of advertising the PTO Open Positions for next year. The Board discussed which committees that have openings. Michelle Barton and Lisa Nishikawa are working on the spreadsheet and how to help the Board manage the tracking of open positions as they become filled.
- The Board decided to send out an Email Blast to the parents advertising the positions. Each Board Member is to send any open positions to Lisa by April 30th and she will put the flyer together. In addition, the PTO will advertise the openings in the Hillside Highlights.
- ISC Council Meeting where Lindsey Andreuzzi will be presenting for Hillside and discussing the 7 Healthy Habits program at Hillside and how the classroom is a culture and a way of life for the student population tonight – April 9, 2014.
- Lori Benedict – incoming PTO President for the 2014-2015 school year presented the Board the calendar for next year. Lori suggested the current meeting start time of 9:10 seemed arbitrary and Diane Cohle explained that 9:10am had been chosen in the past to accommodate the parents who have Preschool age children where drop-off is typically 9am. The Board agreed that the 9:10am start time will remain in effect.
- Lori proposed a new program for PTO meetings: Parent Info Series whereby the PTO would host a speaker at a parent's home 3 evenings throughout the year and charge for attendance. Lori continued to explain that the purpose would be to provide a service to the parents by bringing in experts in various fields (Life Balance, School Security, Social Media – for example) and a revenue stream for the PTO.
- The Board welcomed Lori's idea and supported her in investigating it further.

VP Membership and School Services – Lisa Nishikawa

- Lisa updated the Board on the progress for the 5K Run/Walk – November 2, 2014 has been chosen, the date has been reserved with the Township for Wilson Farm Park. The fee for the event will be \$100 and is not due until closer to the date of the event. 8:30am will be the start time for the walking portion and 9am for the run.
- Sian Keating suggested conducting a contest for the kids to design the t-shirts.
- There was discussion surrounding securing donations for water, etc.
- Lisa asked the Board whether this would be a timed event or just a fun-run. The Board generally agreed it should be a fun-run, but perhaps a clock could be rented/borrowed so those runners who would like to time themselves would be able. Lisa will investigate.
- Planning for next year's Family Night Out – should it be a Family Game Night or a Family Movie Night. The Board discussed the possibilities, but no decision was made.

VP Social Functions – Marcy DelOrefice

- Next year's Book Fair will take place October 27-31st. The Book Fair Committee is planning on a Spring Book Fair, not in February but a little later in the year – April or May 2015.
- The Board discussed tying the Book Fair into Summer Reading and/or required reading for 4th Graders moving into Middle School.
- Marcy asked the Board if the PTO should keep the Skating Party event – we didn't have a Chair this year. The Board decided if someone wants to Chair it, then yes. If not, we will not have it again next year – but let's advertise the position.

VP Fundraising – Ann Davidson (Not Present)

- None

Treasurer's Report – Sian Keating / Maura Harley

- Sian reported the Art to Remember fundraiser did well this year raising \$1900 (Goal was \$1200).
- Cultural Arts budget has not been corrected yet, but will be soon.
- Sian notified the Board that there has been an issue with a parent who has bounced a check and has not rectified the situation. The PTO is out the fees and obviously the amount of the returned check. Does the PTO have a policy regarding bounced checks?
- Currently there is no policy that the Board knows of and given this is an isolated incident, the Board decided to take no action. However, if this becomes a larger problem in the future, the Board will look into developing a policy.

VP Cultural Arts – Carla Ojha

- Carla informed the Board that Cultural Arts is under budget \$1167.
- There is a new position for a Cultural Arts Fundraiser and the opening will be advertised.
- Upcoming events: May 12-16 is Theme Week.
- Cheri Lotan has offered to coordinate production and distribution of the t-shirts for Theme Week. There will be a t-shirt design contest for the kids.
- Next year's Cultural Arts calendar is filling up:
 - November 17th – Allegany River Dancers
 - Week of February 16th – Chinese Paper Cutter
 - May 11-15th will be Theme Week – Darcy McGroarty is the Chair.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20am. The next PTO meeting will take place on Tuesday, May 13, 2014 at 9:10am at Hillside.